

IN THE CLAIMS

1. canceled

2. (currently amended) A method of producing a perovskite complex oxide containing a noble metal element comprising a step of heat-treating a precursor substance containing at least one rare earth element and at least one transition metal element to generate a perovskite complex oxide phase, characterized in that an amorphous substance is used as the precursor substance, the amorphous substance is a precipitated substance obtained by precipitation from an aqueous solution containing R ions and T ions using a precipitant under pH of 6 or higher, the amorphous substance in a powdery state is slurried in a solvent containing ions of the noble metal element, the slurry is dried to impregnate the noble metal element into the amorphous substance, and the solid after drying is subjected to said heat treatment.

3. (currently amended) A method of production according to claim 2, wherein when the amorphous substance is slurried in the solvent containing the noble metal element ions, the slurry is adjusted to [[a]] the pH of 6 or higher in co-presenting nitrate ions and ammonium ions therein.

4. (original) A method of production according to claim 3, wherein the mole ratio of the total amount of nitrate ions and ammonium ions to the total amount of rare earth element and transition metal element in the amorphous substance is greater than 0.6.

5. (currently amended) A method of production according to claim [[1]] 2, wherein the heat-treatment temperature is in the range of 400 – 700 °C.

6. (currently amended) A method of production according to claim [[1]] 2, wherein the amorphous substance is a precipitation product produced by reacting an

aqueous solution of a mineral acid salt of the rare earth element and a mineral acid salt of the transition metal element with a precipitant at a reaction temperature of 60 °C or lower and a pH of 6 or higher.

7. canceled

8. canceled

9. (previously presented) A method of production according to claim 2, wherein the heat-treatment temperature is in the range of 400 – 700 °C.

10. (previously presented) A method of production according to claim 3, wherein the heat-treatment temperature is in the range of 400 – 700 °C.

11. (previously presented) A method of production according to claim 4, wherein the heat-treatment temperature is in the range of 400 – 700 °C.

12. canceled

13. (previously presented) A method of production according to claim 3, wherein the amorphous substance is a precipitation product produced by reacting an aqueous solution of a mineral acid salt of the rare earth element and a mineral acid salt of the transition metal element with a precipitant at a reaction temperature of 60 °C or lower and a pH of 6 or higher.

14. (previously presented) A method of production according to claim 4, wherein the amorphous substance is a precipitation product produced by reacting an aqueous solution of a mineral acid salt of the rare earth element and a mineral acid salt

of the transition metal element with a precipitant at a reaction temperature of 60 °C or lower and a pH of 6 or higher.

15. (previously presented) A method of production according to claim 5, wherein the amorphous substance is a precipitation product produced by reacting an aqueous solution of a mineral acid salt of the rare earth element and a mineral acid salt of the transition metal element with a precipitant at a reaction temperature of 60 °C or lower and a pH of 6 or higher.

16. (new) The method of production according to claim 2, wherein the precipitating step uses alkaline carbonate or carbonate-containing ammonium ions as the precipitant.

17. (new) The method of production according to claim 2, wherein the precipitating step uses carbon dioxide and ammonia as the precipitant.

18. (new) The method of production according to claim 2, wherein aqueous solution has a total ion concentration of R and T that is within a range of 0.01 to 0.60 mole/L.